

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1 to 12, as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus, comprising:  
a a) input unit that inputs ~~means for inputting~~ successive image data;  
a b) detection unit that detects ~~means for detecting~~ a change between the successive image data;  
a c) generation unit that generates ~~means for generating~~ initial contour information for extracting an object existing ~~present~~ in the image data, in accordance with an output of from said detection unit and a color of the image data ~~means~~; and  
a d) extraction unit that extracts ~~means for extracting~~ object image data corresponding to the object on the basis of the initial contour information generated by said generation unit ~~means~~.
2. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a coding unit that encodes ~~means for coding~~ the object image data extracted by said extraction unit ~~means~~.
3. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising a transmission unit that transmits ~~means for transmitting~~ the image data encoded ~~coded~~ by said coding unit ~~means~~.

4. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the image data input by said input unit means include data picked up by a video camera, said input unit means inputs parameter data concerning a camera parameter of the video camera, and said detection unit means detects a change between the successive in image data based on the parameter data.

5. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said detection unit means performs different detection processing in accordance with the parameter data.

6. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said input unit means includes the video camera.

7. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said generation unit means includes a first area-division unit that performs ~~means for performing~~ area division based on on a color and texture, and a second area-division unit that performs ~~means for performing~~ area division based on motion of image data, and generates the initial contour information in accordance with outputs from said first and second area-division units means.

8. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising a display unit that displays ~~means for displaying~~ image data input by said input unit means, wherein said display unit means can display an extraction result of said extraction unit means so as to visually check the extraction result.

9. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said coding unit means performs coding processing complying with MPEG-4 (ISO/IEC 14496).

10. (Currently Amended) An image processing apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising a recording unit that records means for recording image data encoded coded by said coding unit means on a recording medium.

11. (Currently Amended) An image processing method comprising the steps of:

an input step of a) inputting successive image data;  
a detection step of b) detecting a change between the successive image data;  
a generation step of c) generating initial contour information for extracting an object existing present in the image data, in accordance with a detection result of the an output of said detection step and a color of the image data; and  
an extraction step of d) extracting object image data corresponding to the object on the basis of the generated initial contour information generated in said generation step.

12. (Currently Amended) A storage medium which stores computer readable program codes for executing of image processing steps, including steps, wherein the storage medium stores:

a) a code of an input step of inputting successive image data;  
b) a code of a detection step of detecting a change between the successive image data;

c) ~~a code of~~ a generation step of generating initial contour information for extracting an object existing present in the image data, in accordance with an output of said ~~a detection result of the detection step~~ and a color of the image data; and

d) ~~a code of~~ an extraction step of extracting object image data corresponding to the object on the basis of the initial contour information generated in ~~the~~ said generation step.